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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 17 August 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Once again, Israel, the occupying Power, is grossly confirming its insistence on continuing to pursue its illegal, expansionist agenda in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, rather than pursuing serious peace efforts that will bring an end to its insidious, illegitimate forty-four year belligerent military occupation of the Palestinian land since June 1967.

Following the recent announcements of the approval of plans for the construction of at least 2,500 new units in two illegal settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem, to which I referred in my recent letters of 8 and 11 August 2011 (A/ES-10/526-S/2011/500 and A/ES-10/527-S/2011/515), the Israeli Government declared, on 15 August, that the Defense Minister has approved plans for the further expansion of the illegal settlement of Ariel, established far beyond the pre-1967 borders, 22 kilometres deep into the central northern West Bank.

The plans provide for construction of at least 277 new units in that illegal settlement, with the declared intention of providing at least 100 of those units for Israeli settlers who had in the past been living in settlements in the Gaza Strip prior to the so-called "disengagement" carried out in 2005, who will now be again transferred illegally into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as thousands of settlers like them have already been transferred, in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The approval of these plans raises the total of new units approved in the illegal settlements to nearly 2,800 units in the span of just two weeks, revealing the intensity and extent of the occupying Power's attempts to further entrench these illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to further alter the demographic composition and character of that Territory in order to forcibly and illegally prejudge the final outcome of a peace settlement, undermining the essence and foundation of the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders.

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Such illegal, unilateral actions constitute flagrant provocations that are stoking already-high tensions and frustrations among the Palestinian people as they continue to witness the confiscation and colonization of their land by Israel, the occupying Power, and are deepening the people's mistrust of the occupying Power, whose malicious intentions are repeatedly exposed by such illegal actions and policies. In this regard, we reiterate the total condemnation and rejection by the Palestinian people and their leadership of all Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including, in particular, the construction of settlements and the Wall and the demolition of Palestinian homes and properties.

Furthermore, we reaffirm the international consensus position, firmly rooted in international law, that such colonization measures have no legitimacy whatsoever and will remain rejected and unrecognized by the international community. Indeed, Israel's continued pursuit of settlement activities constitutes a brazen challenge to the international community's repeated calls for a total cessation of all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Israel's defiance of these international calls, including that of the Quartet of yesterday, 16 August 2011, whereby it issued yet another unequivocal demand for a complete cessation of settlement activities, must not be tolerated. Immediate and direct measures by the international community are needed to enforce international law. Failure by the international community, including the Security Council, to do so will only foster further Israeli impunity. As such, more than merely threatening the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, the continuation of Israel's illegal settlement campaign will make it physically and politically impossible to achieve the two-State solution.

The dangers are of the occupying Power's illegal, destructive course of action are manifold and require urgent redress if there is to be any chance to stop Israel's violations and the further deterioration of the situation on the ground and to salvage the prospects for achieving a peace based on the two-State solution in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the long-standing terms of reference of the peace process. The responsibilities and obligations of the international community, including of the Security Council, in this regard are clear and must be upheld. The time is now, and effective and serious international action must be undertaken.

Today, I must also draw your attention to the continuing Israeli military campaign against the Occupied Gaza Strip that continues to cause loss of civilian life and injuries. Yesterday, 16 August, the Israeli occupying forces carried out a series of air strikes against civilian areas in the Gaza Strip that targeted Gaza City, Khan Younis and Rafah. Those attacks resulted in the killing of one Palestinian man, Mousa Shteiwi, aged 29, and the wounding of several others, including a 6-year-old child. Such Israeli military operations continue to terrorize the Palestinian people in Gaza, further deepening their suffering under the blockade being cruelly and illegally imposed by Israel. Also yesterday, a Palestinian man, Amin Taleb Al-Dabash, aged 38, was killed when he was run over by a vehicle of the Israeli occupying forces in the Jabal Abu Ghneim neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem. We condemn all such violent actions and reiterate the need for protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 399 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 11 August 2011 (A/ES-10/527-S/2011/515) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations